

USS Constitution Honors Fallen Service Members

By Seaman Shannon S. Heavin USS Constitution Public Affairs

LEXINGTON, Mass. – Sailors assigned to USS Constitution honored fallen Massachusetts service members of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom during the first Battle Road Memorial March in Lexington, Mass. Oct. 2.

Sailors performed a color guard during the opening ceremony, and four others participated in the march.

The Battle Road Memorial March correlates the historic beginning of the American Revolution to modern-day military operations.

“This was a unique experience as service members to honor patriots who sacrificed their lives for our freedom,” said Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) Airman Mark Alexander. “It’s an honor to take part in this first battle road march; I hope it becomes tradition.”

Constitution Executive Officer, Lt. Cmdr. Anthony Savage, Master-at-Arms Seaman Gary Matthias and Airman John Fisher also participated in the march sponsored by the Third Legal Support Organization, a group comprised of Massachusetts Army Reservists.

The opening ceremony of the march began at 9 a.m. with more than 100 Army Reservists in attendance. The names of the 125 Massachusetts service members who died were stated out loud, following brief speeches, including one by Massachusetts Senator Scott Brown.

“As an officer of forty years, I believe we don't do a good enough job of honoring those fallen Soldiers, and these bricks represent the great honor of our brothers and sisters,” said Col. Patrick Cummings, Third Legal Support Organization. “It was a tremendous honor as well to have the USS Constitution here to represent the blue.”

The march followed with each participant carrying in their seabag a brick with a fallen service member's name painted on it.

The march lasted about five hours, ending at the Old North Bridge in Concord, Mass., the site of the first American victory in the Revolutionary War. The participants returned to Lexington by bus, and thereafter, a celebration ensued at St. Nicholas Church.

“As the group of Sailors and Soldiers marched that same path taken by the British Soldiers in 1775, I was able to empathize and better understand the significance of the events of April 19th and 20th of 1775,” said Savage. “For the duration of the march, we united the armed forces and reflected the past and fight for freedom to come. Today was a day to remember.”

Constitution is located in the Charlestown Navy Yard in Boston. She is the world's oldest commissioned warship afloat and welcomes more than 500,000 visitors a year.

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